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UNCLAS STATE 105117

SENSITIVE  
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [GT](#)  
SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR HEAD OF STATE-LEVEL DEMARCHE BY  
AMBASSADOR

¶1. This is an action request for the Ambassador or  
Charge.

OBJECTIVE  
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¶2. To seek tangible improvements in UNGA voting by Guatemala  
as part of a targeted effort to engage 17 friendly  
countries whose UNGA voting records vary sharply from  
their close relations with the United States. The President  
and the  
Secretary have endorsed this initiative.

ACTION REQUESTED  
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¶3. To align Guatemala's voting record more  
closely with that  
of the U.S. on key votes, the Ambassador or Charge is  
requested to meet with the Head of State, upon his return  
from UNGA, and deliver a demarche bringing his attention  
to Guatemala's low voting coincidence with the U.S. (when  
not including consensus resolutions). If the  
Head of State is not available to receive the demarche  
within a reasonable time, the meeting should be held with  
the Foreign Minister.

TALKING POINTS  
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¶4. Ambassador or Charge may draw on the following points:

-- As allies, the United States and Guatemala  
cooperate and work closely together in many areas. (Post may  
add specific examples at its own discretion). We have many  
ties of friendship as well as common hopes,  
principles, and values.

-- Yet in 2007 the Guatemala voted with the U.S.  
in the UN  
General Assembly only 12.2 % of the time, when not  
including consensus votes.

-- The United States views the United Nations as having  
great potential for achieving progress on many issues. If  
agreement and widespread support among Member States can  
be reached for balanced and responsible resolutions,  
decisions, and other initiatives it would make the UN more  
effective and a more credible voice in the world.

-- We understand that some votes may be explained by  
solidarity with regional groups or blocs based on other  
factors, but, in our view, such solidarity often appears  
inconsistent with the national interests and policies of  
your government outside the unique culture of the United  
Nations.

-- As the new session of the UN General Assembly begins, I

hope you will bear in mind that in the U.S. both the President and the Congress view UN voting coincidence as a barometer of the closeness of a bilateral relationship.

-- In the coming weeks I hope we can begin a dialogue between our experts and yours on how we might better improve cooperation on issues of importance before the UN.

End Points.

#### BACKGROUND ON THIS INITIATIVE

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15. Key issues of importance to U.S. policy interests are being brought increasingly to vote in the UN. These include human rights, the UN budget, Israel, and development assistance. At the same time, the Group of 77 (G-77) and Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) bloc is more unified and votes consistently against the U.S. The Department and other agencies have been working on a long-term strategy to counter these developments in the General Assembly. A key element of the Department's strategy is the delivery of demarches at the most senior level in 17 select capitals on UNGA voting records, U.S. priorities, and areas where we might work together more effectively. This is the first requested demarche, which seeks tangible improvements in UNGA voting by the host country. Details on each UN Member State's most recent voting records are available on the Department's website at [www.state.gov/p/io/rls/rpt/c25867/.htm](http://www.state.gov/p/io/rls/rpt/c25867/.htm) in the annual report to Congress entitled "Voting Practices in the United Nations 2007." The Department and other agencies believe that the diversity of national interests and ideologies outside the UN can be translated into better voting inside the UN through friendly but assertive approaches to G-77/NAM countries that have reasonably good relations with the U.S.

RICE